

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
Group Art Unit 2821

In re

Patent Application of

Phillip L. Lundman

Application No. 10/731,226

Confirmation No. 4922

Filed: December 9, 2003

Examiner: Patrick F. Brinson

"FLEXIBLE EMERGENCY GAS PIPELINE
PLUG"

I, Ellen R. Webb, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the US Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date of my signature.

Signature

Date of Signature

COMMENTS ON EXAMINER'S STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Mail Stop ISSUE FEE
Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This communication is in response to the Notice of Allowance dated January 12, 2005 of claims 1-28. The Applicant is submitting the following comments in response to the Examiner's statement.

The Applicants assert that the prior art does not teach or suggest:

1. An apparatus for stopping a high pressurized fluid from escaping a rupture in a pipeline, the apparatus comprising:
 - a support member having a first end, a second end, and an outer surface;
 - an inner inflatable bladder sealingly engaging the first end and the second end of the support member and substantially covering the outer surface of the support member, the inner inflatable bladder comprising a material layer substantially impermeable to fluid;
 - an outer material layer substantially encasing the inner inflatable bladder and sealingly engaging the first end and the second end of the support member, the outer material

layer being formed of a woven fabric material capable of withstanding high inflation pressures of approximately 100 psi; and

an inflation hose for supplying pressurized fluid between the outer surface of the support member and the inner inflatable bladder.

Or

19. A method of plugging a high pressure natural gas pipeline to prevent natural gas from escaping a rupture in the pipeline, the method comprising:

inserting a plug into the pipeline through an opening in the pipeline;

positioning the plug within the pipeline such that the plug is substantially over the rupture in the pipeline; and

inflating the plug to an inflation pressure of at least 100 psi such that the plug engages against the rupture when the plug is inflated.

Or

23. An apparatus for stopping a high pressurized fluid from escaping a rupture in a pipeline, the apparatus comprising:

a bow stiffener having a first end, a second end, and an outer surface;

a shoe positioned at one of the first end of the bow stiffener and the second end of the bow stiffener, the shoe having an angled surface for biasing movement of the apparatus within the pipeline;

an inner inflatable bladder sealingly engaging the first end and the second end of the support member and substantially covering the outer surface of the support member, the inner inflatable bladder comprising a material layer substantially impermeable to fluid;

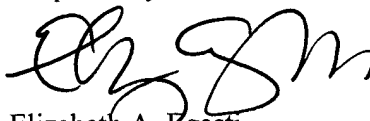
an outer material layer substantially encasing the inner inflatable bladder and sealingly engaging the first end and the second end of the support member, the outer material layer being formed of a woven fabric material capable of withstanding high inflation pressures of approximately 100 psi; and

an inflation hose for supplying pressurized fluid between the outer surface of the support member and the inner inflatable bladder.

The Applicant also notes that the application includes a number of dependent claims. The dependent claims depend either directly or indirectly from one of the patentable independent claims, and consequently, are patentable based upon their dependence and upon other features and elements claimed in the dependent claims but not discussed herein.

The undersigned is available for a telephone conference at any time.

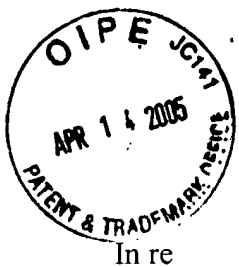
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Elizabeth A. Egasti', written in a cursive style.

Elizabeth A. Egasti
Reg. No. 54,635

Docket No.: 062021-9015-00
Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
100 East Wisconsin Avenue
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4108

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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
Group Art Unit 3754

In re

Patent Application of

Philip L. Lundman

Application No. 10/731,226

Confirmation No.: 4922

Filed: December 9, 2003

Examiner: Patrick F. Brinson

"FLEXIBLE EMERGENCY GAS
PIPELINE PLUG"

SUBMISSION OF FORMAL DRAWINGS

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Commissioner for Patents
ATTENTION: Official Draftsperson
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

Enclosed for filing are the formal drawings for the above-identified application. Although not requested by the Office, entry of the enclosed drawings is respectfully requested. The enclosed drawings should be used for printing in the patent.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth A. Egasti
Reg. No. 54,635

File No. 062021-9015-01
Michael Best & Friedrich LLP
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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202-4108
414.271.6560

I, Ellen R. Webb, hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the US Postal Service as first class mail in an envelope addressed to Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450, on the date of my signature.

Signature

Date of Signature